

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MINUTES

A regular meeting of the City of Brenham's Historic Preservation Board was held on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the Brenham City Hall, Council Chambers, at 200 West Vulcan Street, Brenham, Texas.

Board Members present:

Hal Moorman - Chair
Angelia Gerhard
Jennifer Hermann
Rachel Nordt
Brad Tegeler
Tommy Upchurch

Board Members absent:

Becky Bosse

Community:

Michael Breddin
Sherry Harber

City of Brenham Staff present:

Stephanie Doland, Development Services Director/Historic Preservation Officer
Shauna Laauwe, City Planner
Kim Hodde, Planning Technician

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Hal Moorman called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Reports and Announcements

- **Leigh Linden, Main Street Manager**, provided a brief report to the Board on various initiatives and events being coordinated by the Main Street/Downtown Committees. Ms. Linden stated that there are currently about 42 volunteers, some of which also serve on various boards and committees.

The Organization Committee just completed the 3rd and final installment of the Oral History Project. This segment focused on segregation, the Jewish community, pharmacies, and Reese Lockett. All three volumes can be purchased on a thumb-drive or through a Vimeo account (similar to You-Tube).

The Design Committee is working on the Egg Project. About 31 people have signed up for the egg decorating project. The completed eggs can be submitted as early as March 19th but must be submitted by March 22nd. The voting will conclude on April 11th.

Ms. Linden reported that there are three façade grants open waiting on document submission for reimbursement. These include the following:

- Padgett Hearing – masonry repairs
- Old National Bank Building – masonry repairs
- Jim’s Whims Building – masonry repairs

The Promotions Committee is currently working on various events including Hot Nights Cool Tunes, Summer Sip, and working with the Texas Legislature for designation of Brenham as the Ice Cream Capitol of Texas.

The Economic Vitality Committee – Has been working toward promoting parking in City Lot C and a shade structure will be installed to promote the underutilized parking lot (on Vulcan Street between Park and Baylor). Phase 1 will be for 10 covered spaces on the Vulcan Street side and should be completed by Wednesday. Phase 2 will be for 18 spaces on Baylor Street. Hopefully this covered parking area will encourage employees and business owners in the downtown area to utilize this parking area to create more patron parking in the downtown area. Board Member Tegeler encouraged covered parking in the Commerce Street parking lot as well as signage to let people know that this is a free public parking lot.

- **Stephanie Doland, Development Services Director/Historic Preservation Officer**, informed the Board of an upcoming Texas Historical Commission conference she plans to attend. She hopes to establish connections that may provide insight on historic paint color selections and preservationists to host a Board training in the future.

REGULAR SESSION

4. Discuss and Possibly Act Upon Approval of Minutes from January 16, 2025, Board Meeting

A motion was made by Board Member Hermann and seconded by Board Member Tegeler to approve the minutes from January 16, 2025, Board Meeting.

Chairman Hal Moorman called for a vote. The motion passed with voting as follows:

Angelia Gerhard	Yes
Jennifer Hermann	Yes
Hal Moorman	Yes
Brad Tegeler	Yes
Tommy Upchurch	Yes
Becky Bosse	Absent
Rachel Nordt	Absent

5. Discuss and Possibly Act Upon a Certificate of Appropriateness Application for The Forge Building located at 203 W. Alamo Street, Brenham, Texas.

Stephanie Doland, Development Services Director/Historic Preservation Officer, presented the staff report for a request from Michael Breddin for a certificate of appropriateness for exterior alterations to the Forge Building located at 203 W. Alamo Street. The subject property was recently sold by Connie Wilder to Michael Breddin and Ed Fulkerson of Leftovers Antiques. The new property owners wish to renovate the interior and exterior of the building and reopen as a retail use for the sale of antiques, furniture, décor and household items. The scope of work for the interior renovations are under evaluation, however the applicant desires to proceed with a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Board for the following proposed exterior renovations: a) replace the front, side and rear elevation windows, b) replace the front and rear elevation doors, c) remove the awning from the front façade, d) install copper gas lanterns (light fixtures) to the front façade, e) repair transom window on the rear façade, and general in-kind repairs to the metal roof and brick façade, and f) paint the building and trim in Sherwin Williams Tricorn Black.

The applicant intends to brand the building as “The Forge” and in doing so, restore many of the buildings historic attributes to the original form. The building is believed to have been constructed circa 1890 by master blacksmith, Captain Frederick Willheim Schurenberg and his sons. The Old Brazos Forge was adjacent to the alley which was used to assemble buggies and to the west, neighbor 205 W. Alamo was later built to house the first Ford Dealership in Washington County.

The applicant has incorporated the former blacksmith/forge use of the building as inspiration for the redevelopment of the building. The design purposely integrates the desire to enhance the buildings’s characteristics through a “play on shadows” with black exterior paint proposed in recognition of the former blacksmith use. The addition of gas lanterns is to further highlight the building and offer lighting for patrons and pedestrians.

ANALYSIS OF CITY OF BRENHAM HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE:

The Historic Preservation Ordinance (Ordinance), Chapter 13 of the Brenham Code of Ordinances governs the process associated with obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for renovations to property within the Historic Preservation District. More specifically, Section 13-7 of the Ordinance further outlines when considering a COA, to “review all new construction plans within historic districts in order to ensure the exterior architectural features visually complement the surrounding buildings and environment in relation to design, height, scale, and setback.” Section 13-8 establishes as the Criteria for Approval of a COA the City of Brenham Adopted Design Guidelines for the Brenham Downtown Historic District as well as the Adopted Secretary of the Interior’s Standards. With respect to the criteria by which the Board is to be guided for approval of a COA application, Staff finds the following criteria applicable as stated in Section 13-8(b):

- (1) Every reasonable effort shall be made to adapt the property in a manner which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, object, or site and its environment.

- (2) The distinguishing original qualities or character of a historic building, structure, object, or historic property of any kind and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
- (9) Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural, or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.
- (10) Whenever possible, new additions or alterations to buildings, structures, objects, or sites shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the building, structure, object, or site would be unimpaired.

Staff recommends **approval** of the proposed Certificate of Appropriateness, finding the following:

- a) The current plastic windows are nearing the end of their useful life, are residential in nature, and are not historically significant. Replacing the windows with a custom black, steel frame, dual pane glass product will improve the visual character of the building and will protect the historical building from the elements while contributing to the overall contemporary design theme attributing to the buildings original use of the Old Brazos Forge "The Forge".
- b) The existing doors (front entrance and rear entrance) were installed approximately 25 years ago with materials available at the time. The proposed front and back door replacement will match the proposed windows, which will also be constructed with a black steel frame with dual pane glass. The proposed front and rear door replacements will be consistent with other features of the structure and contribute to the overall design and historical character of the building.
- c) The front façade of the building includes a cantilever awning with a corrugated metal roof. The awning was added in the 1990's and is not original to the building. It is not structurally secure, and the applicant proposes to remove the awning. The building contains many other architectural features, and the removal of the awning will result in a more historically accurate building façade and will preserve the original brick façade from further deterioration.
- d) The addition of four copper and gas lanterns to the front façade contributes to the overall design aesthetic of highlighting the building's features through lighting and shadows. The proposed lighting is in accordance with the adopted Design Guidelines for the Brenham Downtown Historic District which encourage lighting that will highlight the original building design elements and provide additional lighting for pedestrians. Additionally, there are additional gas lantern-style fixtures present within the District including on the Law Offices of Russel T. Noe, the Moorman Tate Law Offices, and the now vacant building at the intersection of West Alamo and South Saint Charles Street. The proposed four lanterns contribute to the design aesthetic and if removed in the future would not remove the essential form and integrity of the building.

- e) General maintenance and repair to the building is encouraged to protect the building. Alterations including metal roof repairs, removing unnecessary equipment from the metal roof, re-opening boarded windows, repairing the transom window on the rear façade, are all encouraged to protect the structure.
- f) The existing rear façade adjacent to Commerce Street is currently painted Sherwin Williams Tricorn Black. The applicant proposes also painting the remaining side and front façade in Tricorn Black. Though the application includes renderings with a gray color shown on the trim, the proposal includes painting the trim Tricorn Black as well. Staff was unable to identify any other properties on the block face or in the Historic District that were painted in the same color on both the primary façade as well as the trim and accents of the building. Staff recommends approval of the COA **with the recommendation** that a different paint color be applied to the trim of the building where applicable. A different paint color on the window trim, door trim and applied around the rectangular brick insets located above the windows and doors would continue to highlight the buildings distinguishing original qualities.

Mr. Michael Breddin stated there is a lengthy lead time for the windows and doors so he is trying to get approval so that he can get them on order. He further stated that the rear of the building is currently painted Tricorn Black and that is what he was considering for the entire building; however, he is currently sampling various shades of black paint to see what will look the best. His preference is a low-gloss paint to help cover the imperfections of the building and that is why he would prefer to paint everything one color but he is not opposed to a different trim color. He also stated that the windows and doors will have a slight color variation due to them being prefabricated and pre-painted. Mr. Breddin stated that the awning has to be removed since it is causing damage to the building in its current condition. The awning was installed later and is not original to the building. He stated that he would prefer to leave the awning off but if he needed to reinstall an awning, he would. Mr. Breddin stated that he would like to have the building ready to open by August but he is unsure as to what issues he will encounter when he starts the remodel of the interior of the building.

The Board indicated that there was not an issue with removal of the awning since it doesn't have any historical value to the building.

A motion was made by Board Member Tegeler and seconded by Board Member Hermann to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness request submitted by Michael Breddin for proposed improvements to *The Forge Building*. The approval included the following:

- a. Window replacement
- b. Door replacement
- c. Removal of front façade awning
- d. Installation of copper gas lanterns
- e. General in-kind repairs

The Board did not approve the exterior paint or trim colors (item f) as part of the motion and noted that these items would need to return to the Historic Preservation Officer for an Administrative Certificate of Appropriateness.

Chairman Hal Moorman called for a vote. The motion passed with voting as follows:

Angelia Gerhard	Yes
Jennifer Hermann	Yes
Hal Moorman	Yes
Brad Tegeler	Yes
Tommy Upchurch	Yes
Becky Bosse	Absent
Rachel Nordt	Absent

6. Staff update on the Urn Project at the Barnhill Center located at 111 W. Main Street, Brenham, Texas.

Stephanie Doland, Development Service Director/Historic Preservation Officer provided the Board with an update on the deteriorating decorative urns atop the Barnhill Center, which have become a safety concern. In early February, damage was discovered to the decorative urns atop the Barnhill Center, including a large, cracked piece that fell from the southeast corner onto the roof. The City consulted with a local architect and multiple contractors on the possible repair and method of repair to prevent any further deterioration to the urns. Being that all 14 urns are in varying states of deterioration the recommendation was to temporarily remove the urns completely and restore them to their original design. Urns that could not be salvaged would be used as molds for replacement fixtures.

The first phase of this project will involve removing these fixtures, preserving them for duplication, repairing the roof surface, and sealing exposed edges. The removal of the urns is planned for the week of March 3rd.

The Barnhill Center Board will be meeting March 10th to consider Phase 2 of the project including the limited number of qualified contractors capable of performing this type of Historic Preservation work. The urns will be repaired or replicated to maintain the building's original appearance. No certificate of appropriateness is required, as this is considered ordinary maintenance under the Historic Preservation Ordinance Section 13-7(a)(6).

7. Adjourn

Chairman Hal Moorman adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Hal Moorman
Hal Moorman
Board Chair

September 30, 2025
Date

ATTEST:

Kim Hodde
Kim Hodde
Planning Technician

September 30, 2025
Date